

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SIG-03 SSO-00 ICAE-00 PA-01 CIAE-00
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O R 012332Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: TEXT OF MAY 1 PRESS BRIEFING ON AFGHAN COUP

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE SUBJECT OF RECOGNITION OF
THE NEW AFGHANISTAN GOVERNMENT AND ANY OTHER COMMENTS
YOU MIGHT HAVE ON THE NEW LEADERSHIP THERE?

A: AS YOU KNOW, THE QUESTION OF RECOGNITION UNDER THE FORMU-
LATION OF THE LAST FEW YEARS DOESN'T ARISE PER SE. ON THE
QUESTION OF THE NEW REGIME, FIRST, INSOFAR AS THE GENERAL
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SITUATION IS CONCERNED, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, ALL THE AMERICANS
IN THE COUNTRY ARE SAFE; NO U.S. FACILITIES HAVE BEEN ATTACK-
ED. WE DO NOT KNOW THE NATURE OF THE POLICIES OF THE
GOVERNMENT AS YET. WE ARE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THE
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY HAS NOW EMERGED AS
THE PRESIDENT OF AFGHANISTAN. WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH OTHER

GOVERNMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT. WE DEPLORE THE BLOODSHED THAT TOOK PLACE DURING THE COURSE OF THE COUP.

OUR EMBASSY, AS WELL AS EMBASSIES OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS WITH DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN KABUL, HAS RECEIVED A FORMAL REQUEST FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOR RECOGNITION OF THE NEW REGIME. I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO CHARACTERIZE THE RECEIPT OF THIS REQUEST. BUT TO REPEAT, AS YOU KNOW, WITHIN RECENT YEARS, WE HAVE DEEMPHASIZED RECOGNITION, PER SE, AND TO USE THAT OLD FORMULATION, "YES, AT THE MOMENT, THE QUESTION OF RECOGNITION DOES NOT ARISE." OTHER THAN THAT, WE ARE SIMPLY LOOKING INTO THE SITUATION.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS TO ONGOING U.S. PROGRAMS CONCERNING AFGHANISTAN?

A: I THINK, AT THIS POINT, NOTHING. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANYTHING HAPPENING.

Q: DO YOU HAVE A LIST OF THEM THERE? THERE ARE SOME A.I.D. PROGRAMS.

A: NO, I DO NOT. I WILL GET THEM DOWN FOR YOU.

Q: WHAT ARE THE FACILITIES THERE THAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT WHEN YOU SAID, "NO U.S. FACILITIES"?
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A: AMONG THE OFFICES WE MAINTAIN GOVERNMENTALLY, WE ALSO HAVE SOME PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS THERE. I'M NOT AWARE OF THE ENTIRE LIST, JOHN; BUT I MEANT WHETHER IT BE ANYTHING FROM AN INFORMATION OFFICE TO AN A.I.D. MISSION TO THE FACILITY ITSELF OF THE EMBASSY.

Q: WAS THERE ANY MILITARY AID TO AFGHANISTAN?

A: AGAIN, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO PULL THAT FOR YOU AND SEE WHAT THE LEVEL OF OUR PROGRAMS IS IN AFGHANISTAN. I DON'T KNOW.

Q: DO YOU KNOW WHETHER THERE WAS ANY SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUP ITSELF?

A: I DON'T KNOW. I'M NOT AWARE OF ANY. I'VE SEEN NO REPORTS TO THAT END.

Q: HODDING, WHEN YOU SAY THE QUESTION OF RECOGNITION DOESN'T ARISE, THIS MEANS THAT RELATIONS ARE NOT QUESTIONED IN ANY REGARD?

A: THE IMPORTANT QUESTION IS NOT RECOGNITION. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS CONTINUE. AT THIS POINT, AS I SAY, WE'RE STUDYING THE SITUATION. THERE IS A DISTINCTION THAT HAS BEEN MADE BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS', COUNTRIES' RECOGNITION AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. THAT IS A DANCE, FRANKLY, SINCE I DON'T HAVE THE BACKGROUND AS TO WHEN AND HOW IT BECAME THE NEW PHRASEOLOGY. I WOULDN'T WANT TO TRY TO DANCE AROUND TOO MUCH ON.

Q: WHAT I'M WONDERING, IS THERE UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION --

A: REMEMBER WE WENT THROUGH ALL THIS AT THE TIME WHEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THERE WAS ANOTHER COUP IN A SET OF ISLANDS NOT LONG AGO, AND THE SAME DRILL TAKES PLACE HERE, AND I'M JUST SAYING THAT FOR THE MOMENT, THAT'S THE BEST I CAN DO FOR YOU.

Q: SO, THIS IS A ROUTINE REVIEW OF --

A: IT IS A ROUTINE PERIOD OF TIME THAT WE'RE TAKING, AND I'M SURE THAT THE SITUATION WILL RESOLVE ITSELF.

Q: HODDING, THE ONLY CRITERIA THAT YOU'RE ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE IS WHETHER THIS NEW REGIME HAS CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT AND SO ON?

A: I THINK WHAT I'VE SAID IS ABOUT WHAT WE'RE DOING.

Q: HODDING, YOU DON'T HAVE THERE ANY ECONOMIC A.I.D. OR MILITARY A.I.D. FIGURES AT ALL?

A: I DON'T HAVE THE FIGURES. I'M SURE THAT THE DESK COULD GIVE IT TO YOU, RIGHT OFF-HAND.

Q: THANK YOU. END TEXT. VANCE

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